

[I, Carlos Jose Sequeira, widower of 51 years of age, of Portuguese nationality and born in Hongkong having been duly sworn, make the following statement:

PROTECTION ZONE OTHERWISE CONCENTRATION CAMP OF LIQUICA

- a) The village of Liquica, about a square mile, was chosen to be the protection zone. All the remaining families that did not abandon BAUCAU on the 14th November 1942, when the Japanese invaded that village, were transferred by the Portuguese boat OKUSSEI, under Japanese control, on the night of 16th to 17th November 1942, and on the night of the 20th November 1942, to LIQUICA, except the Governor's family and some officials who were taken to Dili by Japanese trucks, to join His Excellency the Governor at the Government's House there. Almost everything that one possesses had to be left behind, because orders were to the effect that no one was to bring more than that which is considered indispensable.

GENERAL CONDITION

- b) Upon our arrival at Liquica we were given accommodations by the Chefe do Posto of Liquica but as the number of houses was limited, several families had to be put into one house like sardines in tins, and family peace was thus destroyed. For about eight months, life went on like this, and during this period, it seems that the Japanese were trying to make friends with everyone by allowing soldiers to pay frequent visits to some houses, and mingled with its inmates, in a most friendly manner, but after this period, conditions started to change, and in a most methodical way, and in July 1943, all the radio sets were taken away, all rifles and ammunitions were ordered to be handed over; nobody was allowed to keep out of the house after 8 p.m.; parties of from 2 to 6 Japanese soldiers made constant search for compromising objects, followed by ill treatment of the community, and prohibition of the natives to be in contact with us. Prices of food began to rise, and as it goes on rising, natives were not allowed to sell to the Portuguese anything, and the weekly markets began to be controlled by the police, and only what was left after they have bought the best, and the best part of the whole, the remainder could be bought by the famine crowd. Finally even this mode of buying was taken away from us. We had to go weekly to the Government's Cantina to receive a meagre supply of food and the Cantina itself is being controlled by them. By the beginning of 1944, all the families living in MAUBARRA received orders to move to Liquica. Old men, women and children, had to make the journey some 15 miles on foot escorted by one mounted Japanese guard and several natives all armed. If lodgings in Liquica were already a necessity, with the influx of the new comers, things became worse. Servants were then taken into custody under all pretext and severely beaten for almost no fault, and many were afraid to return to work. Every now and then water supply were cut away and the excuse was that something was wrong with the pipes, when these are connected to the supply tank, next to their Headquarters.

FOOD SUPPLY

As aforesaid, not much more is to be added, except that natives were not allowed to go to Liquica to sell, and even the few remaining families who lived in the suburb, are not allowed to sell to the Portuguese. The rationed food received at the Cantina is so small in quantity, that it is not worth mentioning. No oil or fat was distributed, no sugar except about 200 grams once in 6 to 10 months time, and for vegetables we were given rotten potatoes and yam roots. We also received Wild beans and wild mandioc. Many had stomach troubles and some eventually died of poisoned beans. Everybody was down in health and weigh several stones less. I for instance, was weighing 85 kilos when I first arrived in Liquica, was weighing 49 kilos in 1945. Many died of insufficiency of food, and had the condition lasted for six months more, I do not think there will have been many left to-day to tell this story.

MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND ATTENTION

Not much has been done in this respect, for, although we had a doctor and several male nurses in the camp, there were no medical supplies to cope with the exigencies. Nearly everyone had a sore or a complaint. The majority had swollen feet and some even swollen faces and more. Malaria was almost a general case, so was general weakness, from want of food.]



LACK OF COMMUNICATION

We were living actually without any outside news. No natives were allowed to approach our camp. We do not know what was passing around us outside the barbed wires and anything that we happen to hear were news given to someone on purpose by the Police, that the allies were losing, which of course, only the ignorants believed.

WAS IT IMMUNE FROM AIR ATTACK ?

Yes up to a certain period, but when the Japanese tried to induce passing-by planes to attack the camp, we were then left liable for air attack. I say this because when the Liquica Hospital was machine gunned by some 10 planes, this incident was the result of the Japanese having treacherously opened fire from a spot between the Hospital and their High Command on a squadron of planes which were flying North, and these planes located the fire, made a half turn, and started machine gunning a limited area, about, and including the Hospital, but when the women and children who were hidden in the building could not stand any more the attack, and resolved to get out of the building, risking their lives, the pilots must have spotted them, for they immediately ceased fire and flew away, not without killing the very Japanese who opened fire from a machine gun. (I got this information from somebody whose name I do not recollect now: The male nurse LUIZ LEMOS was called to the Japanese Headquarters to treat a wounded Japanese immediately after the attack.) Except for a few slight scratches from broken splinters, nobody was seriously hurt at the Hospital.]

ATTENDANCE AT RELIGIOUS SERVICES

This was normal except for a few sarcastic remarks thrown now and then to church goers by Japanese guards, no interference was made on the part of the Japanese.

SANITARY AND HYGIENE ARRANGEMENTS

Nothing was done in this respect by the Japanese and everything was left to nature.

FORCED LABOUR

Directly against the internees no labour was forced, but by punishing severely the servants as stated above, many families were left without help and had to do their water carting and fetching of firewoods etc. In another word, forced labour was indirectly forced on the internees.

PORTUGUESE AND JAPANESE CURRENCY

Portuguese currency was the only currency used at the beginning but as the Japanese started on propaganda in the interior depreciating the value of this currency, natives started to refuse accepting Portuguese money and slowly, everything was paid in Japanese Guildens, only with a very few exceptions, Portuguese money could be made use of. From informations received after the war, very active propaganda did take place at the weekly markets in the interior of the Colony and to show and convince the natives that Portuguese money was of no value, officers in concluding their public speeches, use to burn some notes, and offer to exchange to the natives Japanese notes for Portuguese notes which the natives immediately decided to do.

ANY ANTI-ALLIED PROPAGANDA

Yes, of every kind. Only the natives, the ignorant ones of course, would believed.

[ This is all I can offer for appreciation about the Concentration Camp.

Dili, 3rd July 1946.

/s/ C. J. Sequeira.

Sworn before me this third day  
of July, nineteen hundred and forty-six.

/s/ H. Pos  
Captain, N.E.I. Army